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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. Elmer B. Staats

DATE: Oct. 17, 1955

407450

FROM : Richard Hirsch *RH*



File

SUBJECT: Soviet Atomic Aircraft.

1. According to an AP story and to the clipping from the NEW YORK TIMES attached, an East German radio broadcast last week stated that the Soviets were developing an atom-powered supersonic plane that would make its maiden flight "in the near future".

2. I have talked to some members of the Working Group about this (Farley in State, Salisbury of AEC, Hanson of USIA, and Irwin in the Rockefeller Office). All agree that it might be useful if someone at the Board lunch raises the question of the truth of this story with Mr. Dulles. I believe Nelson Rockefeller may do this Wednesday.

see memo 10/18/55

3. While the Working Group recognizes that the status of the U.S. atomic aircraft program is highly classified, it recognizes that if the East German rumor is reasonably true, the U.S. might have to be prepared for an early surprise at a Soviet May Day aerial show.

4. FBIS has not been able to locate the text of the reported East German broadcast.

Attachment:
Clipping.

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OCB/SPS:RHirsch:GBA

[Handwritten initials]

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U. S. Trailing Soviet?

It is true what they say
East Germany, the Soviet Union
might be slightly ahead of
United States in the development
of an atomic-powered plane.
Communist broadcast from East
Germany said the Russians were
working on the atom-powered
supersonic plane that would
make its maiden flight "in the
near future." The latest guess
here on when a United States
plane powered by nuclear energy
will take the air is sometime
around 1959.

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10/11/59

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